

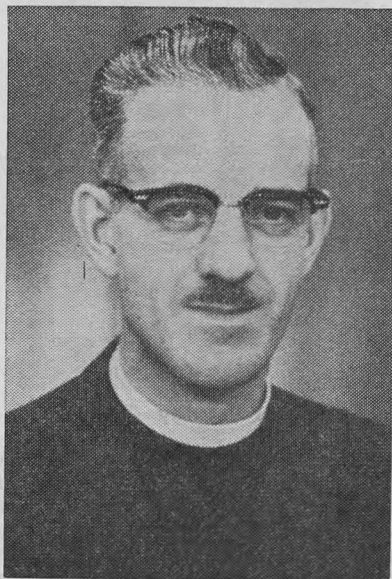
THE PARISH MESSENGER

A PERSONAL VISITOR TO THE PARISHES

EASTER, 1961

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

New Pastor



Rev. Walter Becker

The Rev. Walter G. Becker was installed as pastor of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, St. James, Winnipeg, Manitoba, on Sunday, Feb. 26th. He replaces the former president of the Icelandic Synod, the Rev. Eric H. Sigmar, who moved to Camas, Washington, in January.

The Rev. V. J. Eylands, D.D., acting president of the Icelandic Synod, preached the charge to the pastor and installed him. The Rev. G. A. Heimann, D.D., pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Winnipeg and Pastor Becker's step-father, preached the charge to the congregation. Dr. Earl Treusch, Executive Secretary of the Canadian Lutheran Council, brought greetings.

(Please turn to Page 5)

An Easter Meditation

by PASTOR BECKER

One of the most powerful Easter sermons I have heard was preached without an audible word being spoken. It came to me often, but with special clarity in the early hours of the morning or at sunset in the fall of the year.

It was my privilege, as pastor of a rural church in Ontario some years ago, to live beside a most beautiful cemetery. This cemetery lay on a hill overlooking picturesque farms. Majestic fir trees, like sentinels placed by God to guard a holy sanctuary, bordered the neat rows of tomb stones. No Christian could walk in that holy place without feeling the presence of God. Many a word of Scripture came to mind as I walked there, but one was most persistent: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (John 12:24). These words were once spoken by Jesus in response to a request by some Greeks expressing a desire to see Him.

Why just this verse? And why use it for an Easter meditation? Was Jesus not speaking of His death? All this is true — but to me it always brought the Easter message. You see, there was always a field of grain just beyond the edge of the cemetery. Months before the farmer had placed shrivelled, dry, seemingly dead kernels of grain into the soil—he had buried them as we bury our dead. But in death they brought forth life! Resting in the fertile

(Continued on Page 2)

THE PARISH MESSENGER
Official Publication of the Icelandic
Evangelical Lutheran Synod of
America — U.L.C.A.

O. Jack Larson, Editor
Box 367, Arborg, Manitoba

Printed by the Vopni Press
Portage la Prairie, Manitoba

Parish Deaconess



Sister Laufey Olson

An Easter Meditation (cont'd)

soil, absorbing the good of the sun and the rain, they awoke to new life in a new form . . . and the end was that they bore much fruit!

Christ too, had been laid in a tomb after His death on the cross. His enemies were sure they had seen the last of Him. His friends betrayed their lack of faith by their tears, their doubts, and their fears. Like a grain of wheat our Lord had fallen into the earth. But that wasn't the end if the story! The angel came — the stone was rolled back — the evidence would not be denied! "He is not here — He is risen!"

"The third day He rose again from the dead," so we confess each Sunday morning. And ever since that morning when He came forth from the tomb Easter is more than a date up on the calendar. It is more than an opportunity to wear new spring clothes. It is even more than a church service. It is, as someone has said, "... an awakening in the heart to the miracle of life. Easter is the seal of the Christian's certainty that Jesus lives and that we shall live also!"

In that cemetery one could not escape the fact that "the wages of sin is death . . ." Every tombstone witnessed to this fact. But the grain that had fallen into the earth and brought forth much fruit was a constant reminder that "the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23). Our Lord, by His suffering and death, brought forth a harvest of the children of God, millions of them, that sing His

Sister Laufey Olson has accepted a call to become the first parish deaconess in the history of First Lutheran Church in Winnipeg. She has already served the congregation for one year but was employed by the Board of Missions. While working for the Board she also served the Arborg-Riverton Parish and St. Stephen's in Winnipeg. Sister Laufey, a graduate of the Baltimore Deaconess School in 1957, was consecrated in 1958.

praises on earth and worship Him in heaven forever!

Let our churches be filled this Easter with those who never get tired of hearing that glorious message of life, "He is not here — He is risen!" Thus the world will see the FRUIT of Him who fell like a grain of wheat into the ground but did not remain alone . . . and perhaps some will stay to worship Him and live!

Church Vocations Conference

A Church Vocations Conference for older high school pupils and university students was held at First Lutheran Church in Winnipeg on February 12th. The conference brought together the leaders and young people of the Icelandic Synod, the Western Canada Synod, and the Augustana Synod.

There was a very good response to this meeting where opportunities for full-time Christian service in the Church were presented and questions were answered. Dr. J. Victor Benson, from the Board of Higher Education of the United Lutheran Church in America, was the main speaker. Sister Laufey Olson, Pastor Garth Lof, and Pastor Kurt Keitel made all the arrangements and participated in the afternoon and evening program.

WORKSHOP HELD

A Stewardship and Evangelism Workshop was held for lay readers of the Icelandic, Western Canada, and Augustana congregations. The response was good and those attending were enthusiastic about what had been presented. Among the leaders were the Rev. Clifton M. Weihe, an associate director of Evangelism for the United Lutheran Church. Halldor Bjarnason, Synodical Evangelism Committee chairman; Ray Vopni, Synodical Stewardship secretary; the Rev. Norman Nelson, pastor of Calvary Church in Seattle; and the Rev. Garth Lof, pastor of St. Mark's Church in Winnipeg.

STUDENT MEETING

A fellowship hour for university students of the Icelandic, Western Canada, and Augustana Synods was held February 13th at First Lutheran Church in Winnipeg. It was hoped that the young people might become acquainted with one another and also learn something of the Church's work and the Church's needs. The speaker for the evening was Dr. J. Victor Benson of the Board of Higher Education in New

Blind Bartimeus

Blind Bartimeus at the gates
Of Jericho in darkness waits;
He hears the crowd — he hears a
breath

Say, "It is Christ of Nazareth!"
And calls in tones of agony,
"Jesus, have mercy now on me!"

The thronging multitudes increase;
Blind Bartimeus, hold thy peace!
But still, above the noisy crowd,
The beggar's cry is shrill and loud;
Until they say, "He calleth thee!"
"Fear not, arise, He calleth thee!"

Then saith the Christ, as silent
stands

The crowd, "What wilt thou at my
hands?"

And he replies, "O give me light!
Rabbi, restore the blind man's sight!"
And Jesus answered, "Go in peace,
Thy faith from blindness gives
release!"

Ye that have eyes, yet cannot see,
In darkness and in misery,
Recall those mighty Voices Three,
"Jesus, have mercy now on me!
Fear not, arise, and go in peace!
Thy faith from blindness gives
release!"

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Since 1946, LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF has shipped more than 685,000,000 pounds of food, clothing, medicines, and other help for distribution to the most needy of the world's suffering people. The dollar value of that aid exceeds \$112,000,000, but far more important than the supplies and their dollar value is what that aid has meant to people who live out part or all of their years in lanes of sorrow and distress. To them it has meant that someone else, someone whom they have never seen, has been concerned for them and for their welfare.

York City. Dr. V. J. Eylands and Sister Laufey Olson also participated.

Pastor Better

The Rev. E. S. Brynjolfsson, pastor of Icelandic Lutheran Church in Vancouver, B.C., returned to his pulpit on the first Sunday in January and has now resumed his regular parish schedule. Pastor Brynjolfsson had been hospitalized for several weeks in the Vancouver General Hospital before returning to his home in late December. The entire Synod had prayed for his recovery. LUTHERAN WORLD ACTION was short-changed by the United Lutheran Church in 1960. We gave only 97.21% of our minimum goal. The other seven Lutheran bodies combined to take up the slack to exceed the \$3,980,000 goal by \$199,000. This year we should demonstrate our concern for the world's desperately needy by also going over the top — and Easter is an excellent time to start!

Suppose you discovered that a family in your neighborhood — father, mother, and two children — were living in a cellar where they had been trapped by some disaster ten years ago. They hadn't been able to dig their way out? Would you care? Would you?

You'd be calling out the fire department and the police . . . You'd be rounding up the neighbors into rescue squads . . . You'd be grabbing a pickaxe yourself to hack away at that cellar . . . You'd be lining up friends to give these people a hand and help them get back on their feet.

Yet two and a half million people are trapped in your world. Forced to flee from native lands they are, for the most part, without homes, without jobs, and with few possessions. They are citizens of nowhere. They are — refugees.

Do you care?

**SUPPORT LUTHERAN
WORLD ACTION**

Pastor Busy

Dr. V. J. Eylands, pastor of First Lutheran Church in Winnipeg, is a busy man these days. In addition to his many duties as pastor of a large city congregation he has been elected acting president of the Icelandic Synod, an office he has previously held for five years. He is also traveling around (Winnipeg, North Dakota, Lundar, etc.) giving an illustrated lecture on Palestine in which he shares experiences from his trip to that land last summer. Then in the first week of April he will represent our Synod at the President's Conference in Pittsburg.

However, he has taken time out to observe his 60th birthday. In honor of that occasion, a group of people in Iceland, including the Most Reverend Sigurbjorn Einarsson, the Bishop of Iceland, are sponsoring the publication of a book containing some of his writings, including his travel story, which has appeared in "Logberg-Heimsskringla." The book, of course, will be published in Icelandic.

New Life Mission

The Gimli congregation is currently in the midst of a "New Life Mission." Each Sunday in March cards were given to all worshippers in order to compile an overall survey of those being served by the congregation. Each person was asked to give statistics about his church attendance, affiliation, etc. (the cards were not signed). After the congregation has thoroughly examined itself a specific program of Evangelism will be designed to meet its needs. Mrs. Ethel Howard is chairman of the congregation's Evangelism committee, and the Rev. Lorne Nadiger is the pastor.

Halldor Bjarnason and the Synodical Evangelism committee are eager to work with all congregations to help them strengthen their programs.

1960 Benevolence Receipts

The synodical treasurer reports 1960 receipts for apportionment (minimum fair share on the basis of membership) at an all-time high of \$14,169.15. This is \$900 higher than in 1959. However, only eight congregations met their full apportionment and twelve contributed less than in 1959. Receipts for Lutheran World Action were \$290 higher than in the previous year.

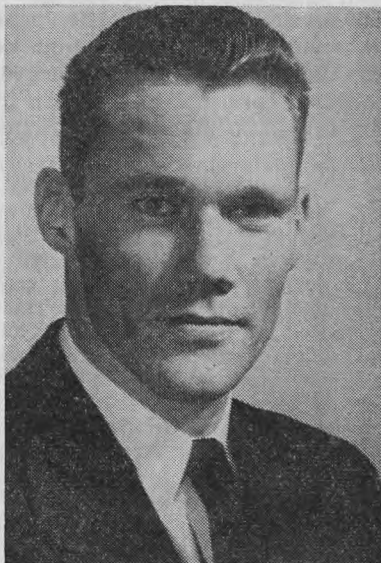
	1960 Apportionment	Receipts	%	Lutheran World Action
First, Winnipeg	\$ 4,428.60	\$ 2,396.04	54.1	\$ 29.35
Selkirk	2,983.20	759.66	25.5	130.40
Gimli	1,801.80	891.40	49.5	23.00
Icelandic, Vancouver	1,762.20	775.96	44.0	25.00
Calvary, Seattle	1,683.00	1,687.14	100.2	211.96
Braethra, Riverton	1,683.00	360.77	21.4	200.01
Ardal, Arborg	1,537.80	1,056.72	68.7	303.55
Lundar	1,234.20	96.12	1.8	
Vikur, Mountain	1,089.00	366.10	33.6	61.59
St. Stephen's, St. James	1,075.80	1,212.89	112.7	173.95
St. Paul's, Minneota	1,062.60	939.60	88.4	283.53
Herthubreith, Langruth	930.60	199.40	21.4	
St. Peter's, Svold	818.40	240.35	29.4	38.40
Vidalins, Hensel	666.60	233.00	34.9	27.30
Geysir	646.80	182.05	28.1	47.65
Breithvikur, Hnausa	640.20	5.00	.7	7.00
Concordia, Churchbridge	613.80	500.00	81.4	
Mikleijar, Hecla	521.40			
Glenboro	481.80	482.40	100.1	102.17
Arnes	435.60	21.00	4.8	20.00
Immanual, Baldur	429.00	429.00	100.0	103.32
Frikirkju, Bru	429.00	429.00	100.0	55.30
Fjalla, Milton	422.40	150.00	35.5	20.00
Vidir	402.60	21.70	5.3	
Betel, Silver Bay	290.40			
Lincoln, Taunton	290.40	290.40	100.0	15.00
Gudbrands, Morden	283.80			
Hallson	270.60			
Vidines, Husavick	270.60	25.00	9.2	25.00
Trinity, Pt. Roberts	178.20	178.20	100.0	63.00
Frelsis, Grund	112.20	112.20	100.0	70.27
Trinity, Camper		15.00		15.00
Viking Luther League				113.38
Sundry		113.05		49.92
	<hr/> \$ 29,475.60	<hr/> \$ 14,169.15	<hr/> 48.1	<hr/> \$ 2,215.05

New Pastor (continued)

Pastor Becker was born in Winnipeg in 1918, the son of the late Pastor Henry Becker, one-time president of the Western Canada Cynod. He is a graduate of the Lutheran Col-

lege and Seminary at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. He served rural congregations on the prairies for four years and has been in the Canada Synod for the last eleven years. He was in Wellesley, Ontario, before moving to St. James.

Pastor Leaving



Rev. O. Jack Larson

The Rev. O. Jack Larson, pastor of the Arborg parish for the past four years, has resigned in order to accept a call from the Board of American Mission of the United Lutheran Church to develop a new congregation in Edmonton, Alberta. He plans to leave Arborg shortly after Easter.

During his four year pastorate the former Arborg-Riverton Parish was divided with the Rev. Richard E. Magnuson being called to Riverton, and the Arborg church was re-modeled and enlarged. Pastor Larson served the synod as chairman of the Parish Education committee, advisor to the Viking Luther League, member of the Executive Board, and as editor of the "Parish Messenger."

We can never determine what the church should do by public opinion polls. Samples of the preferences of its members are always irrelevant, no matter how good their sentiments. In this matter, it is God's Church, and He is the only voter who counts.

"Question Seven"

"Question Seven," a new feature length movie depicting present-day pressures against a pastor and his son in Communist East Germany has been completed and is currently being shown in several metropolitan centres in the United States and Canada. This picture is sponsored by the Lutheran Churches of the United States and Canada and is produced by the same company which made the movie, "Martin Luther." It was filmed on location in West Germany not far from the East Zone where a massive and effective persecution of Christians is taking place.

The title, "Question Seven," refers to a questionnaire distributed by the Communist rulers to the students in the schools of East Germany. The answers given to the questions pose a critical test to conscience because only those students deemed reliable are allowed by the government to pursue advanced study toward a career of their own choosing.

Plan to see this film when it comes to your area. The critics praise it as excellent.

Rural Churches Advised

DON'T FIGHT — ADJUST

Rural people should adjust to change rather than fight it, 70 pastors and lay people from 30 Lutheran churches were told at a meeting on the church and rural trends in Melville, Saskatchewan in October.

"I am convinced that we spend far too much time trying to protect traditional ways of doing things," said Dr. V. W. Larsen from the Centre of Community Studies in Saskatoon, "when the traditional way of doing things has little valid relationship to the basic values that are important to us." Dr. Larsen cited Carl Kraenzel, who put it more bluntly in his book "The Great Plains in Transition:" we must adapt or get out!"

Icelandic Synod Last

While the other synods of the United Lutheran Church were increasing their giving for the world-wide work of Christ's Church in 1960 by an average of 17%, the Icelandic Synod gave 19% less than in 1959, and was last in percentage of apportionment contributed. In the three previous years the Icelandic Synod had ranked 30th among the 32 synods.

1960 APPORTIONMENT RECEIPTS

Synod	Amount	Per Cent
Rocky Mountain	\$ 82,200.	100.22
New Jersey	424,446.	100.10
Central Pennsylvania	1,670,740.	100.00
Florida	89,314.	100.00
Kentucky - Tennessee	66,813.	100.00
Pacific Southwest	308,022.	100.00
South Carolina	264,000.	99.37
Michigan	135,872.	98.96
West Virginia	51,386.	98.25
New York & New England	1,048,614.	96.82
Georgia - Alabama	78,948.	96.51
Iowa	188,154.	95.12
Maryland	493,369.	93.00
Northwest	733,141.	92.12
Indiana	205,570.	90.63
Pittsburg	746,794.	89.55
Ohio	791,510.	89.41
Illinois	477,936.	88.13
North Carolina	319,906.	83.95
Virginia	185,723.	83.01
Mississippi	4,142.	80.74
Central States	347,003.	79.47
Pacific	102,013.	76.65
Canada	223,545.	74.55
Texas - Louisiana	66,378.	72.51
Pennsylvania Ministerium	1,424,141.	68.28
Nova Scotia	19,441.	61.29
Caribbean	14,746.	56.34
Wartburg	91,434.	55.21
Western Canada	41,212.	38.94
Sloviak Zion	33,342.	34.27
Icelandic	7,500.	32.31
Total	<u>\$10,737,364.</u>	<u>86.73</u>

Apportioned U.L.C.A. budget was \$12,380,160.

In 1959 the Icelandic Synod gave \$9,300.

News Flashes

The new ST. STEPHEN'S Lutheran Church in St. James, Manitoba, was dedicated on St. Stephen's Day, December 26, 1960.

ARDAL Lutheran Church, Arborg, Manitoba, dedicated its renovated and enlarged church building on December 18, 1960.

CALVARY Lutheran Church in Seattle, Washington, has engaged an architect and preliminary plans for a new building have been completed. At the first of the year the congregation had almost \$16,000 in its Building Fund.

The Board members of FIRST Lutheran Church in Winnipeg honored Mr. K. W. Johannson, retiring president of the congregation, at a special dinner on March 16th.

GIMLI, ARBORG, and GEYSIR made use of "star trees" in their annual Christmas appeal for Canadian Lutheran World Action. The Christmas trees in the respective churches had no decorations except silver stars (one star was placed on the tree for each dollar given). The Gimli tree had over three hundred stars!

The annual report from LANGRUTH states that the high point of the year was the service on May 29th when twenty young people were confirmed. And on Palm Sunday, 1960, fourteen adults were received as new members of the congregation. The Rev. Ingthor Indridason is the pastor.

SEVEN DEADLY SINS OF OUR TIMES

- 1, Politics without principle;
- 2, Pleasure without conscience;
- 3, Knowledge without wisdom;
- 4, Wealth without work;
- 5, Business without morality;
- 6, Science without humanity;
- 7, Worship without sacrifice.

—The Island Lutheran

The Empty Cup

Each morning God puts into our hands an empty cup. The cup is the new day, which we are to fill. Each moment of the day we are engaged in the process of its filling and are determining the contents. Shall it be filled with evil tempers, fears, envious thoughts and angry resentment? Or shall it be filled and running over with laughter and happiness, brave words, and kindness to all those about us? Be it one or the other, at evening we must bring the cup of the day to our Lord.

Quote from a church bulletin:
"This is your church. Enter without knocking, leave the same way."

The Devil's Corner

DEAR READER:

Everyone ought to read, but you should choose carefully what you read. The two books I abhor the most are: the Bible and the Lutheran. It has distressed me no end that so many congregations of the church are sending the Lutheran to every home. That magazine has too much in it about God and the work of the church all over the world. It makes people interested, informed, and more active in Christianity. Now I have some books which are much more helpful to My Cause, and will help win people to My Kingdom. You can find them on any newsstand or in any library. So please help Me by decreasing the Lutheran subscriptions, or do not read it if the mailman does deliver it. Religious reading is dry. **YOU WILL FIND A MORE JUICY LIBRARY IN HELL.**

Sincerely,
THE DEVIL.